mode when it is placed near a fixed object while it is not being used. For example, under the present invention, the device will still enter idle mode if a stack of paper is placed on top of the device.

[0109] Although the present invention has been described with reference to preferred embodiments, workers skilled in the art will recognize that changes may be made in form and detail without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A method in a device having a display, the method comprising:

   generating at least one sensor signal using at least one sensor in the device;

   generating one or more context values that indicate how the device is situated relative to one or more objects based on the at least one sensor; and

   a control step for using a context value to control the operation of one or more aspects of the device.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein generating one or more context values comprises generating a tilt context value that indicates how the device is tilted relative to the earth.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the control step for using a context value to control the operation of one or more aspects of the device comprises changing the orientation of an image on the display based on the tilt context value.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the control step for using a context value to control the operation of one or more aspects of the device further comprises changing the mapping of directional inputs relative to the display.

5. The method of claim 3 wherein generating a context value further comprises generating a flat context value that indicates that the device is laying flat and wherein the control step for using a context value to control the operation of one or more aspects of the device further comprises selecting an orientation for an image on the display by finding a tilt context value that was maintained for longer than a set period of time before the flat context value was generated.

6. The method of claim 2 wherein the step for using a context value to control the operation of one or more aspects of the device comprises changing the contrast level on a display based on the tilt context value.

7. The method of claim 2 wherein the step for using a context value to control the operation of one or more aspects of the device comprises scrolling an image on the display based on the tilt context value, the rate of scrolling being based on the difference between a current tilt context value and an initial tilt context value that was determined when scrolling was initiated.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein scrolling an image comprises removing at least one tool bar from the display while scrolling the image.

9. The method of claim 7 wherein the control step for using a context value to control the operation of one or more aspects of the device comprises changing the orientation of an image on the display based on a tilt context value unless the tilt context value is being used to control scrolling of an image on the display.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein generating one or more context values comprises generating a holding context value that indicates that the user is holding the device and at least one orientation context value that indicates that the device is in an orientation consistent with the user wanting to use the device and wherein the control step for using a context value to control the operation of one or more aspects of the device comprises placing the device in a full power mode based on the holding context value and the orientation context value.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein generating one or more context values comprises generating a holding context value that indicates that the user is holding the device and wherein the control step for using a context value to control the operation of one or more aspects of the device comprises preventing the device from entering an idle mode based on the holding context value.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein generating one or more context values comprises generating a sequence of proximity context values that indicate the proximity between the device and an object and wherein the control step for using a context value to control the operation of one or more aspects of the device comprises preventing the device from entering an idle mode based on the sequence of proximity context values.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the control step for using a context value to control the operation of one or more aspects of the device comprises allowing the device to enter an idle mode if all of the proximity context values in the sequence of proximity context values are the same.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein generating one or more context values comprises generating a holding context value that indicates that the user is holding the device and at least one orientation context value that indicates that the device is in an orientation consistent with the user wanting to use the device and wherein the control step for using a context value to control the operation of one or more aspects of the device comprises activating an application based on the holding context value and the orientation context value.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein activating an application comprises activating a sound capturing application so that it captures sound.

16. A device with a display, the device comprising:

   at least one sensor that generates a sensor signal indicative of the orientation of the device relative to the earth;

   control means for using the sensor signal to control the operation of at least one aspect of the device.

17. The device of claim 16 wherein the at least one sensor comprises a tilt sensor.

18. The device of claim 17 wherein the control means uses the sensor signal from the tilt sensor to scroll an image on the display, the scrolling being controlled in part based on the difference between a current signal from the tilt sensor and a signal from the tilt sensor when tilt scrolling is initiated.

19. The device of claim 18 wherein scrolling further comprises removing at least one tool bar from the display during scrolling.

20. The device of claim 17 wherein the control means uses the sensor signal from the tilt sensor to set the orientation of an image on the display.

21. The device of claim 20 wherein the control means does not change the orientation of the image on the display when a portion of the image is being scrolled.

22. The device of claim 20 wherein the device further comprises a directional input and wherein the control means